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LETTER DATED 19 NOVEMBER 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TAJIKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan dated 19 November 1997.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Rashid ALIMOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan
dated 19 November 1997

Thanks to the consistent policy of Tajikistan's leadership aimed at intensifying the process of strengthening lasting peace and stability in the region, the laborious work of implementing the provisions of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan has been going on for about five months now.

Meanwhile, certain forces that are acting to undermine the authority of Tajikistan in the eyes of the world community and harbouring plans for active opposition to the agreements reached between the Government of Tajikistan and the United Tajik Opposition are continuing to strike insidious blows against the delicate shoots of the peace initiatives being implemented in the country.

For example, on 18 November 1997 unknown persons kidnapped two staff members of the mission of the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Tajikistan, whose fate so far remains unknown.

Clearly, the gangsters who committed this terrorist act were pursuing the aim of intimidating the staff of foreign missions accredited in our country. They are also interested in stirring up the situation in Tajikistan and nullifying the positive socio-political developments that have occurred as a result of the purposeful work of people who are not indifferent to the fate of their country.

It is especially worthy of note that the crime was committed on the eve of the forthcoming international conference of donor countries which is to begin its work in the next few days in the Austrian capital of Vienna and is intended to resolve issues of the post-conflict economic development of Tajikistan that are vital for the country. This clearly anti-national action is aimed at undermining the efforts of friendly countries and international organizations which are sincerely concerned to achieve accord and progress in Tajikistan.

Tajikistan has set out strongly on a peaceful course of building a free and economically developed State, and no forces will succeed in hindering this process, for it is the will of the people.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan strongly condemns the criminal act committed against nationals of a foreign State, and states that the forces of law and order in the country will take steps to secure their release and punish the criminals with the full force of the law.